WHAT TO SEE
and HOW TO SEE

Starved Rock State Park

Together With a Short History of the Park,
Its Various Automobile Roads
Thereto and Trails

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A SECTION OF
THE STARVED ROCK STATE PARK
LA SALLE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

SHOWING THE SYSTEM OF MARKED TRAILS AND CHIEF POINTS OF INTEREST WITHIN A SHORT WALKING DISTANCE OF STARVED ROCK

MARKINGS.

River Trail (Yellow)	
Bluff Trail (White)	
Red Trail (Red)	
Pontiac Trail (Red and Yellow)	
Wild Cat Trail (Yellow and White)	

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STARVED ROCK STATE PARK.

The Starved Rock State Park is a tract of some 900 acres in extent of rough, wooded bluff-land, mostly covered with timber, lying along the south bank of the Illinois River midway between Ottawa and LaSalle. It has three road entrances; the western at the highway bridge crossing the Illinois River one mile south of the village of Utica; the eastern at the Salt Well, six miles west of Ottawa, and the southern one mile directly south of the Rock. The entrance for river and interurban traffic is on the river bank at the base of Starved Rock.

The predominating scenic and historic feature of the park is the rocky eminence popularly known as Starved Rock, upon which, in 1683, Sieur de LaSalle and his lieutenant, Henri de Tonti, French explorers, holding letters patent from Louis XIV "to make discoveries and build forts in the western parts of New France," built a fort, naming it in honor of their king, "Fort St. Louis". For nearly thirty years Fort St. Louis was the headquarters of the French in western New France, and in 1684, withstood a six-day siege by the Iroquois Indians. From it, as a base, LaSalle conducted his explorations in the lower Mississippi Valley until his assassination by his own men on Trinity River, Texas, in 1687. Fort St. Louis was abandoned by royal commission, and Tonti recalled, in 1702, but the place was occupied at intervals for several years thereafter by traders and voyageurs.

Of Fort St. Louis itself nothing remains but the site and base, a cylindrical mass of St. Peter's sandstone rising 140 feet from the water's edge and containing on its surface about an acre of land. This mass of rock is popularly known as "Starved Rock" from an incident which occurred thereon about eighty years after the abandonment of Fort St. Louis by the French when a party of Illinois Indians, pursued by a band of Pottawatomies, took refuge upon the summit, and, unable to obtain water and food, were slowly starved to death; hence the name, "Starved Rock."

In the heighth of his glory, LaSalle, standing among the wooden ramparts of Fort St. Louis looked down upon a concourse of wild human life, lodges of bark and cabins of logs clustered in the open places or along the edge of the bordering forest; a mile and a half to the west the lodges of the Illinois sheltering 6,000 souls, and scattered along the valley the cantonments of numerous other tribes, making a total of 20,000 people gathered in the neighborhood of Fort St. Louis and looking to its gallant commander, the Sieur de LaSalle, for protection from their common enemy, the Iroquois. Today, from

the same spot, preserved as a public park and pleasure ground for the people of the State of Illinois, the visitor, facing the east, gazes down upon a glorious panoramic view of the wonderfully fertile and beautiful valley of the Illinois, dotted here and there with fields of growing grain and showing evidences of thrifty husbandry. To the west, instead of the laboring squaw, the warriors lounging in the sun and the whoop and shouts of the native Indian children gamboling on the grass, may now be seen a modern hotel, its broad verandas filled with guests and tourists; a bathing pool and dancing pavilion from which may be heard the clamor and laughter of the modern pleasure seekers.

Between Starved Rock and the main bluff to the south, and partly connected with the Rock is a formation similar in size and character to Starved Rock known as the Devil's Nose.

East of Starved Rock, its base washed by the waters of the Illinois, Lover's Leap, a projection of the bluff and of considerable larger area than Starved Rock rears its massive form, the eastern end of which is known as Eagle Cliff.

A short distance above Eagle Cliff a smaller but similar formation is known as the Bee Hive, and still further east a spur of the bluff, shaped by the action of the elements into the semblance of a pulpit is known as Pulpit Rock, at the base of which a spring c[illegible] clear, cool water belches forth.

At the eastern entrance to the Park is the salt well, a natural spring of water highly impregnated with minerals.

Near the base of the Rock is a modern hotel accommodating two hundred guests, a lunch room, a bathing p[illegible] artesian water, a garage and a dancing pavilion. On the b[illegible] to the south and overlooking the valley is a place reserved for camping parties. Near the hotel, and forming a part of the hotel equipment is an annex with cottages and convenient thereto a well equipped playground for the amusement of children.

Excursion boats, operating under concession from the Park authorities, convey tourists up the river, passing the many scenic features of the river front and landing at the Horseshoe Canyons, enables the visitor to appreciate the wonders of the LaSalle and Tonti branches of the Horseshoe Canyons without the fatigue following the overland trip from the hotel.

Motor busses, also operated under concession, make frequent trips to Deer Park, a remarkable natural formation owned by the Mattheissen estate of LaSalle and open to the public upon the payment of a small fee which goes to the Associated Charities of LaSalle, Peru and Oglesby.

As to the ways of reaching the Starved Rock State Park, the C. R. I. & P. R. R. passes through Utica between LaSalle and Ottawa and busses, operating under concession from the Department of Public Works and Buildings, meet trains at Utica and convey the passengers to the Park. The Chicago, Ottawa & Peoria electric railway, between Ottawa and LaSalle, passes the full length of the Park on the opposite side of the Illinois River. The Starved Rock station

is located directly opposite the Rock and ferry boats meet all cars and convey the passengers across the river.

Several marked and well-known automobile roads pass the Park, viz. the Starved Rock Trail on the north side of the river, the Burlington Way, the Alton Way, the I. V. Way, the S. W. Trail and the State Park Way on the south side of the river.

But the charm of Starved Rock State Park is to be found in the numerous cliffs, gulches and canyons which have been carved by a generous Nature out of the sandstone bluff extending parallel with and at varying distances from the river the whole length of the Park. The principal canyons are named, St. Louis, Kickapoo, Sac, and Fox west of the Rock and French, Pontiac, Wild Cat, Witch's Kitchen, Lone Tree, The Horseshoe Canyons and its branches, Tonti and LaSalle, Owl, Hidden, Hennipen, Ottawa and Illinois east of the Rock.

Following the numerous trails with which the Park abounds, the visitor is led from the fern covered maze of the jungle to the cactus and prickly pear of the desert; from the open and level path of the prairie to the narrow, cliff encircling trail of the mountain; from the undulating footway of the meadow to the narrow, rock-encircled and perpendicular walled canyon.

For the guidance of the visitor, the principal trails have been designated by bands of color painted on the trees. The figures in brackets indicate distance by trail from hotel in miles and fractions of a mile.

The River Trail. (Yellow band) begins at the hotel and mainly follows the river bank conducts the visitor in succession to Starved Rock (1/8), Devil's Nose (1/4), The Bathing Pool, French Canyon (1/2), Lover's Leap (3/4), Eagle Cliff (0.8), The Bee Hive (1.0), Wild Cat Canyon (1 1/4), Camp Point, The Springs (1 1/4), Witch's Cave, Pulpit Rock (1.62), Lone Tree Canyon (1.63), The Horseshoe Canyons (1.75), the junction of Tonti and LaSalle Canyons (1.88), through LaSalle Canyon into the upper LaSalle Canyon (1.9), where it joins the White Trail (2.0).

The Bluff Trail. (Colored white) substantially parallels the River Trail, but follows closely along the edge of the bluff and, commencing back of the hotel, passes Fox Canyon (0.1), The Camping Ground (0.2), upper French (0.5), Pontiac (0.9) and Wild Cat Canyons (1.2); Pulpit Rock (1.6), Upper Tonti Canyon (1.8), Upper LaSalle Canyon (2.2), Parkman's Plain (2.4), Upper Owl Canyon (2.6), Upper Hidden Canyon (2.7), Upper Hennipen Canyon (3.2), The Orchard (3.5), Lookout Point (3.9), Top of Dimmick Hill (4.0), Upper Ottawa Canyon (4.1), Upper Kaskaskia Canyon (4.4), Upper Illinois Canyon (5.2), Salt Well at eastern entrance to Park (5.7).

By leaving the Bluff, or White Trail, at the top of Dimmick Hill, go down the Hill and pass the mouth of Ottawa and Kaskaskia Canyons (4.2), Mouth of Illinois Canyon (4.5), Salt Well (4.5).

The Middle Trail. (Colored Red) begins back of the hotel and passing the Pool (0.1) intersects the Yellow Trail at the Pool and takes a course over Jacob's Ladder (0.3), between the bluff and

Lover's Leap and joins the River, or Yellow Trail, at the Bee Hive (0.5), forming a short-cut on a return trip between the Bee Hive and the Hotel.

The Pontiac Trail. (Red and Yellow) leaves the Yellow Trail at the river near the Bee Hive and passing through the Pontiac Canyon joins the Red Trail at Jacob's Ladder. (Total length, ¼ mile.)

The Wild Cat Trail. (Yellow and White) leaves the Yellow Trail at the river bank at the mouth of Wild Cat Canyon, passes into Wild Cat Canyon, up the bluff to the east of Wild Cat Canyon and joins the White Trail at the Upper Wild Cat Canyon. Distance from the river to the head of Wild Cat Canyon, 500 feet; to the Upper Wild Cat Canyon, 700 feet.

To enable the visitor with limited time at his command to become acquainted with and enjoy some of the main scenic features of the park at a minimum of time and distance, the following tours, within easy walking distance of the hotel, are recommended:

Tour No. 1. Distance, 1,400 yards. Time required, 30 to 45 minutes. Leave hotel (0.0) and follow the Yellow Trail to Starved Rock (0.1), Devil's Nose (0.25), The Bathing Pool (0.3), French Canyon (0.5), return by same route to Pool (0.6), Hotel (0.7).

Tour No. 2. Distance, 2.2 miles. Time required, one hour to one and one-half hours. Leaving hotel, follow Yellow Trail to Starved Rock (0.1), Devil's Nose (0.25), Bathing Pool (0.3), French Canyon (0.5), Lover's Leap (0.7), Eagle Cliff (0.85), Cliff Walk (1.0), Bee Hive (1.1), Mouth of Wild Cat Canyon (1.2), Yellow and White Trail into Wild Cat Canyon (1.3). Return to mouth of Wild Cat Canyon (1.4), and follow Yellow Trail back to Bee Hive (1.5); follow Red Trail over Jacob's Ladder (1.7), to Bathing Pool (2.1), to Hotel (2.2).

Tour No. 3. Distance, 2.5 miles. Time required, one hour to one and one-half hours. Leave hotel by Yellow Trail to Starved Rock (0.1), Devil's Nose (0.25), Bathing Pool (0.3), French Canyon (0.5), Lover's Leap (0.7), Eagle Cliff (0.85), Cliff Walk (1.0), Bee Hive (1.1), Mouth of Wild Cat (1.2), Wild Cat Canyon (1.3), Upper Wild Cat Canyon (1.4), Pontiac Canyon (1.7), Upper French Canyon (2.0), Upper Fox Canyon (2.2), Camp Ground (2.3), Hotel (2.5). This trip can be shortened by leaving the Red Trail west of Pontiac Canyon (1.75), and following Red Trail via Jacob's Ladder (1.8) to the hotel (2.0).

Tour No. 4. Distance, 3.5 miles. Time required, 2½ to 3 hours. Leave hotel via Yellow Trail to Starved Rock (0.1), Devil's Nose (0.25), Bathing Pool (0.3), French Canyon (0.5), Lover's Leap (0.7), Eagle Cliff (0.85), Cliff Walk (1.0), Bee Hive (1.1), Wild Cat Canyon (1.2), into Wild Cat Canyons and return (1.4), The Fernery (1.5), The Springs (1.6), The Witch's Kitchen (1.7), Pulpit Rock (1.7), Lone Tree Canyon (1.75), Horseshoe Canyon (1.9), Tonti Canyon (2.1), LaSalle Canyon (2.4), and returning over the same route to the Bee Hive and following the Red Trail to Hotel (3.5).

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